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ABSTRACT

Adult learning in the Jewish community finds its roots in history, and has received renewed attention. Learning within the religious tradition encompasses a level of thought and activity which goes far beyond the typical adult education format. The purpose of the experience is to develop structures of meaning which aid individuals in relating their own personal experiences to the larger purposes of living within a community of people. A second approach to religious learning suggests that adults are best able to find meaning in their lives by relating their own personal stories to stories of the religious community, discovering a deeper meaning and becoming more committed to the practices and observances of the community. The majority of adult Jewish learning opportunities are sponsored by community-based non-academic institutions, but there are very few sources of information about the adult learning opportunities. An adult Jewish learning program which will take advantage of the wealth of resources that exist within the community while not putting undue pressure on the existing infrastructure is proposed. It is also proposed that a community-wide taskforce be established with lay and professional representation to be charged with the development of a community-based adult Jewish learning program. The role of this taskforce is examined, the implementation process is outlined, and the role of a federal research agency is explored. (Contains 14 references.) (MAS)

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COMMUNITY BASED ADULT JEWISH LEARNING PROGRAM
ISSUES AND CONCERNS

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Adult learning in the Jewish community finds its roots in the biblical and early post-biblical periods of its history. Beginning with the introduction of the Torah or biblical reading by Ezra in the fourth century before the common era (BCE), the Jewish people have long valued the written word as a guide to living. With the destruction of the Temple in the first century of the common era, the role of study gained in importance as the sacrificial cult was formally replaced by a system of worship built upon the concepts of praise, action and learning (Enelow, 1927, p. 6). As a result, learning and the pursuit of knowledge through the exploration of the words of the Torah was understood as the foundation of an ethical and religious life (Drazin, 1940, p. 12).

As the Rabbinic period of Judaism took hold at the beginning of the common era, the adult Jew understood that the study of Torah, in both its narrow and broad sense, was a daily obligation. Through this study, the Jew was able to apply the wisdom of the tradition to daily living. The importance of this obligation can readily be seen by the extensive detail provided in the rabbinic literature regarding how and when study should take place. Those who followed the requirements fulfilled the purpose of the learning experience by deepening their connection to the community while developing a deeper sense of themselves as individuals.

The focus among these early leaders was on the adult population where systems for learning and study were established as a function of the daily activities within the community. The worship experience which took place three times a day became the primary activity for reflection and study based on a variety of text materials from different historical periods. As the depth of the material became more complex and the people no longer understood the language in which much of the material was written, the leaders developed new methods for imparting the wisdom of the sages to the masses including the use of explanatory remarks

and sermons.

This system of educating the Jewish people continued until the advent of the modern period in the 18th and 19th centuries. As the barriers to participation in the larger community disappeared, small groups initiated new approaches to learning called study circles. These provided opportunities to fulfill the religious obligation while becoming participants in the drama of the Jewish people and members of a fellowship or community of Jews (Heilman, 1983, p. 239). Many of these study circles are organized within the orthodox community and serve as the primary program of adult learning for their members.

Throughout this early development of learning, little attention was given to the education of children who learned the traditions, customs and history through active involvement in the family and neighborhood. However, as the transition from the medieval society to the modern or industrial age took place, new forms of educating the masses were developed for both adults and children. Of particular note was the expansion of formal schooling for children and the decline of active Jewish learning among the adult population, especially for the adults in the less observant, non-orthodox segments of the community.

By the latter part of the 20th century, the shift from adult learning to the education of the children was nearly complete within the liberal (non-orthodox) segments of the community. Although adult education programs are regularly sponsored by synagogues and community organizations, the level of intensity in no way matches the level of learning that the contemporary Jew has achieved in the general arts and sciences, and within the various professional fields that make up their career choices. For many, the wide gap between general knowledge and understanding of Judaica creates a tension which interferes with the willingness to explore their Jewish roots. As a result, participation in serious adult Jewish learning programs dropped to its lowest levels by the mid 1980's when several new initiatives

were introduced to bring the adults back into a learning frame.

ADULT LEARNING IN THE RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY

Learning within the religious tradition encompasses a level of thought and activity which goes far beyond the typical adult education format which generally focuses on the acquisition of information and skills. For the religious community, the purpose of the experience is focused on the development of meaning structures which aid individuals in relating their own personal experiences to the larger purposes of living within a community of people. This is generally grounded on a particular set of traditions which emanate out of the religious heritage of the group. For McKenzie, "religious education must be action oriented" so that learners are "prepared to change the world under the guidance of their religious convictions" (1986, p. 13).

A second approach to religious learning suggests that adults are best able to find meaning in their lives by relating their own personal stories to the stories of the religious community. The meaning of life and death, of faith and commitment are enhanced through the stories which relate the rituals, values and beliefs of the faith community to the spirit of a supreme being. By establishing a personal connection between the religious traditions and the general culture, the individual will discover a deeper meaning and become more committed to the practices and observances of the community (Vogel, 1991, p. 69).

From these two perspectives, we begin to understand the different nature of adult religious education. On the one hand, religious education encourages the learner to explore and question beliefs and opinions in light of the past and present in order to gain a deeper understanding of self in relationship to the community. On the other hand, the intellectual exercises should lead the individual to develop an approach to life which provides guidance

in daily behaviors and interactions with others. Within the Jewish tradition, the learning is grounded on a system of actions that focus on the relation that the individual has with others and with God. The joining of these two purposes is intended to help the learner find a deeper meaning and purpose to life.

THE PROGRAMS AND THEIR SPONSORS

Since the vast majority of adult Jewish learning opportunities are sponsored by community based, non-academic institutions and organizations (e.g. synagogues, community centers and membership organizations), categorizing the nature of the programs is rather complicated. There are formal courses that meet weekly as well as lecture series' on particular themes that meet for a set number of sessions. Other formats include evening or Sunday morning lectures and scholar-in-residence weekends, as well as informal study groups. Many organizations also provide brief learning opportunities at the beginning of meetings and provide training for leaders as part of their regular on-going operations.

For the traditional, orthodox community, learning (especially for the men) is considered a daily obligation and takes place either in the synagogue or in small study groups at a variety of locations. Many follow the traditional model of studying or learning a page of the Talmud each day either as individuals or with a set group of peers.

As women have gained greater independence both as learners and in their personal lives, they have pursued a variety of intellectual activities including formal study programs designed by and for women. Among these are several adult institutes which offer courses on both practical and theoretical subjects all of which are grounded in traditional Jewish text materials and are primarily organized in the orthodox community. For those who are seeking a community of women who share common interests, weekly and monthly sessions are

organized to explore issues of mutual concern and study traditional texts. A third model which began primarily as a women's study program within the synagogue but now includes a few men is the Adult Bat Mitzvah (women) or Bar Mitzvah (men) program. The study program lasts either one or two years and often has a dramatic impact on the individual's lifestyle and involvement in the congregation and community.

It should be obvious that programs that take so many different forms are sponsored by agencies and organizations which have different goals and organizing principles. The single largest category of sponsorship is the synagogue. With over three thousand separate and independent institutions in the United States, the synagogues reach the largest number of Jewish people. The purposes of each synagogue are quite similar even though they often do not agree on how to achieve their purpose. In the area of adult learning, the synagogue considers itself ideally positioned to provide for the needs of its members. Consequently, each synagogue sponsors programs following one or more of the models mentioned above. They continually reach out to their members as the primary audience with the goal of increasing their knowledge, understanding and commitment to the values and ideals of Judaism as interpreted by the leaders, both lay and professional, of that particular synagogue.

In many communities, several synagogues join together for special adult learning programs in addition to their own in-house offerings. These community based activities also follow a variety of formats, but the tendency is to provide a series of visiting lectures and/or classes that are open to the members of the sponsoring congregations. The classes are generally taught by the professional leaders, i.e., rabbis, cantors and educators of the congregations with the members being encouraged to enroll in the class that most interests them. These programs usually draw significant participation but are not designed to replace

the regular and normal program offerings of the individual synagogues. Although the primary sponsors of these programs are the synagogues, other community organizations often join as co-sponsors. These include the Jewish Community Center and the Jewish Federation or community welfare fund.

One of the defining characteristics of the Jewish community has been its willingness to provide assistance to other Jewish people when they arrive in the country as new immigrants, particularly when their immigration is the result of a major upheaval in their homeland. During the last twenty-five years, there has been a major influx of Jews from the former Soviet Union who have required a wide variety of services including assistance in becoming Americans. As a Jewish community, this group of immigrants poses a new set of challenges in that they are arriving as Jews but with little understanding of what that means. Therefore, the enculturation process is being conducted on two levels which involves a high level of interactivity with both the social service and continuing education programs in the local community.

In addition to these primary program sponsors, there are a wide variety of independent organizations that sponsor programs of adult learning for their members. Most are membership groups which have a particular political or philosophical position which attracts members. Many have zionist or pro-Israel concerns and, therefore, design programs to promote the special relation that American Jews have with Israel. Others are designed to provide people with opportunities to meet other Jews for both social and intellectual activities, without a particular religious or political orientation. In each of these organizations, adult learning is viewed as a major activity designed to promote the vision and ideology of the group and for maintaining membership.

The funding of most of these programs is much less complex. The faculty are

generally the professionals from the organizations, and are expected to teach as part of their contractual arrangements. In order to cover the minor expenses for publicity and refreshments, either a small fee is charged or an allocation is provided by the organization. When a guest speaker is invited, the organization either subvents the cost from the budget or the funds are provided by a donor through an endowment for an annual program. In some organizations, world renowned speakers are invited in order to attract large numbers of people from the community who pay a fee to attend. Since the organizations have yet to distinguish the course from a lecture as a distinct form of educational experience, these programs are grouped together in this presentation just as they are within the organization's committee structure.

In the last decade, three new initiatives have been widely adopted by various leadership groups. The Florence Melton Adult Mini-School is a two year intensive learning program to introduce members of the community to the basic concepts and values of Judaism. Under the auspices of a community organization, the program meets thirty times per year in a highly structured format. The Wexner Heritage program is a nationally funded initiative for young community leaders who demonstrate a strong personal commitment and wish to combine a deeper understanding of Judaism with their roles as leaders. The third is a national organization, the National Center for Learning and Leadership (CLAL) which offers short and long courses to various community organizations in order to better prepare their leadership to fulfill the role of being Jewish leaders.

DOCUMENTATION AND RESEARCH

There are very few sources of information about the adult learning opportunities within the Jewish community. Most organizations keep few documents which detail their activities in

adult education other than publicity notices and occasional committee minutes. Because of the structure and organization of the programs, instructors are not encouraged to prepare formal course outlines nor are there attempts to evaluate the quality of the experience as a learning activity. Learners are invited to attend and stay as long as they wish, without assignments or a concern as to whether they have learned or grown as a result of their participation.

A few research projects have been conducted over the past forty years which have attempted to analyze the state of adult Jewish learning. These generally take the form of doctoral dissertations which explain the results of the research (Cohen, 1967; Israeli, 1974; Rose, 1974; Epstein, 1980). In a few cases, a national organization has prepared a report on the state of the field in order to guide its work (Union of American Hebrew Ccongregations and the Jewish Education Service of North America). Also, scholarly articles have been published by researchers with a particular interest in the field (Fishman, 1987; Katz, 1990; Lipstadt, 1988; Zachary, 1991). But this research is highly limited and provides little cohesive information about the experience and impact of adult Jewish learning.

ADULT JEWISH LEARNING AND THE LIBRARY SYSTEM

Jews have long been active supporters of a system of sharing books within the community. This dates back to the days when commentaries and analytical materials were first written down. With the advent of the printing press, communal repositories of books were kept and made available to interested parties. This may be the first example of an organized library system which was developed by and for a particular group of people.

In twentieth century America, with the development of an extensive system of public libraries in communities large and small throughout the country, the Jewish people became

active users and supporters of their local library. They turned to the library for reading materials which helped them in becoming integrated into the American community. They used the library as the source of materials in the English language so that they could improve their ability to communicate in their new country. But, while they were taking full advantage of the available public system for their needs as new Americans, they were also developing their own private system of libraries with Judaic materials which they did not expect the public system to include in the collection. Thus, as we prepare for the new millennium, extensive collections of Judaic materials are housed in libraries which are sponsored by and located within the institutions created by the Jewish community.

This dual system of libraries provides two distinct sources of information for the members of the community. On the one hand, they turn to the public library for information which helps them in their interactions with the society at large. They are avid readers of materials in all fields of learning. On the other hand, they do not expect the public library to be the repository of research materials and information about the Jewish people and, therefore, turn to their own system within the institutions of their community for information about Jewish issues. There are, of course, areas where the public and Jewish libraries overlap but these tend to be in the more popular or general areas of Jewish scholarship and literary writing.

Within the Jewish community, there are three types of organizations which have libraries - academic institutions, community based organizations and synagogues. The academic institutions house the largest and most comprehensive collections. They are generally located in the institutions of higher Jewish learning, such as seminaries and community sponsored colleges. There are also exceptional collections of Judaica at universities and colleges which have major programs in Jewish studies. Many Jewish

communities have also chosen to develop libraries which primarily serve the needs of the Jewish population but are open to anyone in the community. These collections are often limited by donations, either financial or in the form of books from personal libraries. In some cities where there is no university or institution of higher Jewish learning with an extensive collection, these community sponsored libraries have developed collections of several hundred thousand volumes and include many valuable research items. Finally, almost every synagogue has established a library to serve its membership. These collections are generally of a more popular nature with little attempt to provide for serious scholarly works other than those which have been donated.

Since there is such an extensive set of libraries in Jewish institutions, the public libraries in most communities have not found it necessary to serve this function. However, in most libraries there are small sections of books on Jewish topics. These collections provide for the needs of both the Jewish members of the community as well as the general population. No attempt is made to provide for those who are conducting serious research, but materials are available for students and community members who are seeking to learn about Judaism and the Jewish people.

PROPOSAL FOR AN ADULT JEWISH LEARNING PROGRAM

The Jewish community in the United States has long been recognized as one of the most literate and highly educated groups within the total population. As individuals, they have prided themselves on their high achievements in academic circles and have gained respect from most Americans for their contributions to the cultural, intellectual and political life of the country. This success in becoming highly integrated into the general society has had a major impact on their level of involvement in Judaism and their understanding and knowledge

of the values, history and ideas of the three thousand year tradition of the Jewish people. For the vast majority of American Jews, in particular those who are not actively involved in the orthodox community, participation in either formal or informal Jewish learning activities has become a rare experience and holds little interest for them. In fact, only about 15 percent of American Jewish adults engage in Jewish learning in any given year (Kosmin, et al., 1991).

For the leadership in the community, many of whom are active learners within their organization, the need to attract more people to engage in the study of Judaism has long been a major goal. They believe that the learning process is what encourages people to develop a stronger identity and relationship with their community and to become more actively involved in it. And yet, the demands within each individual organization limits its ability to provide the type of educational program which will attract large numbers of the membership. For those who do attend, the motivations vary from an interest in learning from the particular instructor as a result of a personal relationship with him or her, to the desire to be with other people who share a common set of values and interests. In this regard, they are not unlike adults from any ethnic or religious group.

In order to provide a substantive adult learning program for the members of the Jewish community, a new and innovative format should be constructed which will take advantage of the wealth of resources that exist within the community while not putting undue pressures on the existing infra-structure. Each of the organizations, whether it be a synagogue, community center or independent group has an established agenda and a desire to promote that agenda with its membership. Part of this agenda includes furthering the Jewish understanding and knowledge of the members. In this area, there is tremendous overlap and commonality, although for some the differences in interpretation often interferes

with the implementation of the common agenda.

To address this concern, we propose that a community-wide taskforce be established with lay and professional representation from each of the organizations to be charged with the development of a community based adult Jewish learning program. With the diverse nature of the people within the community, the taskforce should seek to develop a program of learning opportunities that reaches the widest possible cross-section of the population. To accomplish this objective, the nature and format of the activities, as well as their actual locations within the community, should be designed to meet the needs of the various small groups of members whose interests might be piqued by the particular offerings. The challenge of creating such a program which brings the various groups together to plan and develop a joint program must be assumed by a community which touches everyone. For most of the cities in the United States, this group is known as the Jewish Federation, or the community planning and fundraising body, and is often represented by an agency or committee whose sole function is the furtherance of the Jewish education activities for the community. With the sponsorship of the Federation (either directly or through the education agency) and the financial support that it can provide to the project, the individual organizations should be willing to cooperate in improving the quality of the adult learning program.

THE ROLE OF THE TASKFORCE

For a group that is as diverse as the Jewish community, the challenge of bringing together a consortium of people who represent each of the disparate organizations is the first major task. To accomplish this, the community-wide organization should establish a small working group to begin the exploration of the idea with the leaders of each independent

organization. However, before this working group begins to discuss the concept with outside leaders, they will need to begin the process of learning about adult learning in general, and adult Jewish learning in particular. They will need to become well versed in the philosophical and practical underpinnings of the field in order to develop an appropriate outreach program which will draw the partners into the process.

Once the working group understands their task and is familiar with the field of adult learning, they should begin to meet with the lay and professional leadership in each of the organizations to discuss the concept of a joint venture. Based on a solid foundation of research gathered from academic sources, the proposed model of adult learning will serve as a motivation for the leaders to enter into the process even if they are not ready to commit their organization to full participation. A major component of the initial conversation should be an outline of the work of the Taskforce which will be responsible for developing the implementation plan after an extensive process of learning and data gathering. It should be made clear from the outset that the Taskforce does not plan to move ahead without a process which will explore the needs of all participants and which will be sensitive to the particular concerns of each organization.

The creation of the Taskforce will initiate a learning curve for the members which will lead to their becoming the experts in the field of adult Jewish learning. Their first task will be to learn about the fields of adult learning and adult Jewish learning. To be effective planners of a community program, the Taskforce will need to establish a clear vision for adult learning which indicates to the institutions and the learners what the purposes of the learning experiences will be. By engaging in a dialogue with each other and with professionals in the two fields (adult learning and adult Jewish or religious learning), the Taskforce members will be able to articulate their purpose in clear language that can be distributed to the leadership

of each organization. This statement will set the framework for the process of the Taskforce as it enhances the adult learning opportunities for the residents of the community.

THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

At the heart of the Taskforce's work will be an extensive data gathering effort. By approaching their work as a research project, they will be able to focus their attention on the information which will inform the decision making that will follow. They will need to collect information about the adult learning programs that are currently sponsored by the individual organizations in the community, such as, where programs are offered, when they meet, who teaches the classes, who attends, how much they cost, and where the funds come from. This inventory will provide the committee with a foundation of information which will guide their work.

A community based Taskforce is also in a position to explore successful models of adult learning in other communities. There are three specific venues to consider. First, the Jewish community, both locally and across the nation, will provide examples of creative adult Jewish learning activities. Second, other religious and ethnic groups have demonstrated success which will provide models which can be emulated or adapted to the needs of the community. And, finally, the field of general adult education offers a wealth of initiatives which have achieved widespread success. From each of these venues, models of programming should be examined to learn about the factors which contributed to their success and/or failure. By learning about the work of others, the Taskforce will be able to develop an exciting selection of programmatic initiatives which will attract the largest possible audience from the community.

Despite the knowledge garnered from other sources, there are clear indications that

the faculty are the single most significant group contributing to the success of the program. Their abilities as lecturers and facilitators of learning will either attract or discourage the average adult learner. Most already serve in full-time positions within their organization and are known to a significant number of individuals. Their reputations have been established based upon their current set of skills. Some have proven track records and are considered excellent instructors while others are weak and have deficiencies. The Taskforce, through its process of exploring the field of adult learning, will be prepared to recommend and sponsor training programs for the faculty so that their skills as facilitators will be improved. The results will be beneficial to the program and to the organizations which employ the faculty members. Thus, the professional development component of the Taskforce's work will impact on the community in multiple ways.

To accomplish this agenda, the Taskforce will need to establish a close working relationship with each of the organizations. In light of the differences in approach that many of the groups have in their interpretation of Judaism, a high level of sensitivity will be necessary if a cooperative spirit is to carry the project forward. This may mean that the same course will be taught in several locations by different faculty who represent the different perspectives. Attention will also need to be given to the current thinking among many leaders that the role of the institution or organization is to provide for the needs of its membership. By establishing a community based adult learning program, the institutions will need to understand that a more Jewishly literate population will lead to a higher level of affiliation and that providing access to those who are not yet members should not have a negative impact on their organizations.

An effective marketing strategy is a key element to the overall success of the venture. At every stage in the program's development, Taskforce members will need to promote their

vision and the accompanying product to the appropriate constituencies. They will need to be responsive to the particular needs of both the institutions and the individuals so that all will believe that they are being included in the process.

The last key element in the process is to assure that every program meets the highest standards of excellence. The Taskforce is responsible for quality control which necessitates that criteria be established which can be easily observed. In the area of adult Jewish or religious education, determining whether a program is successful and achieves its goals is highly problematic. Careful consideration needs to be given to the different types of goals and objectives for a religious education program as compared to other types of learning experiences. For example, is the goal to expand the level of knowledge or is it to impact on behavioral patterns? Should the program be concerned with whether the learner increases his or her active involvement in religious practices or only to be conversant with the reasons for the practices? Since the answers to these questions are often ambiguous, recognition needs to be given to the wide variations among the various program sponsors as well as for the learners. For the program to be effective and meaningful for the sponsors, institutions, faculty and learners, clear guidelines should be agreed upon by all participants. By agreeing on a set of criteria in the early stages of the planning process, evaluating the impact of the programs will become a part of the formal activities of the Taskforce and will result in a higher level of adult learning in the community.

Thus, the implementation strategy involves the establishment of a Taskforce which represents both lay and professional leadership from the community. This group of leaders will coalesce around a common agenda as they develop a vision for the learning program and establish appropriate guidelines for its introduction to the community. Their knowledge of the field of adult learning will be reflected in their concern for delivering a quality product

which includes the provision for improving the existing structure and personnel.

THE ROLE OF A FEDERAL RESEARCH AGENCY

The United States has a long tradition built on the concept of the separation of church and state. The teaching and practice of religion is an area in which the government does not interfere. There should be no activities which involve governmental action to promote one religious group over another. The specific interpretation of this policy has been established by the legislative and judicial branches of our government. However, this should not and does not preclude a government agency from engaging in research which will benefit many groups within the society including the vast array of religious organizations.

From this perspective, it is appropriate to suggest types of general research that arise out of the particular needs of the Jewish community which might assist many different groups who are engaged in similar adult learning ventures. Several specific areas arise out of this presentation. First, the model suggested includes a significant learning program on the concepts and practices of adult learning for those involved in the planning of programs. There is currently little guidance for planning and developing continuing education programs within the volunteer sector. Most of these activities are generated by people who contribute their time in support of the organization. While they may bring to the group an expertise in a related area, it is rare for someone to have a background in program planning in the field of adult learning. One major contribution would be for the research agency to examine the field to determine the nature and type of materials that would be most helpful in preparing the volunteers for their role.

Second, most instructors in the adult Jewish learning field do not consider this activity to be their primary role. Rather, they generally serve as a religious leader of the community

or as an educator for the children of the congregation. They have little if any training in the facilitation of learning for adults. Also, even though they have committed their lives to the Jewish community, their background in how to facilitate the religious development of their congregants is almost non-existent. When the instructors become involved in teaching adults, the tendency is to teach like they were taught without a clear understanding of the principles or practices of adult learning. The research agency could make a major contribution to the field by exploring the methods and techniques for preparing the instructors for their role as facilitators of learning. What is known about the preparation of adult learning instructors? What types of programs would be successful? Is it possible to bring together instructors from widely divergent fields for training purposes? How do the techniques of facilitation differ when the nature of the content changes from a practical skill to the inculcation of a value system? Finally, is there a distinction between the methodology for facilitating learning for adults in a religious education program and for those who are learning the value system of the American people, i.e., for new immigrants?

A third area where a federal research agency could make a major contribution would be to explore the motivating factors which drive individuals to enroll in different types of adult learning programs. Is the profile different for an adult who enrolls in a computer class as compared to the one who chooses to study religion? What is known about why people enroll in adult learning activities? How can this information assist the program planners involved in different types of adult learning institutions?

Without infringing on the issues of religion directly, the federal research agency might provide valuable information to those individuals and groups who are actively involved in creating learning opportunities for their memberships. The specific areas of program planning, professional development and learner motivation would be useful to all involved in

the field of adult learning. To provide information which differs from that designed for highly structured organizations such as community colleges or community based adult learning centers where specialists are engaged as program developers, would be most useful and provide a service that scholars and the trained practitioners would not address in their research and writing.

CONCLUSION

Religious learning for adults provides many challenges for the field of adult education. A high percentage of the courses offered are provided within religious institutions under the guidance of a volunteer committee and professional staff who have not received training in the field. As educated individuals, they have all participated in both formal and informal educational programs since their youth. The approach they take to the field is based upon their personal experience as learners at an earlier stage of their life. As a result, the type of courses and the methodology utilized is predicated on a system of learning that is more suitable to a different population.

In the area of adult religious learning, the problems are compounded by the dramatic difference in the purpose of the endeavor. Rather than teaching for knowledge and information purposes which is typical of most adult learning programs, religious education is value centered with the explicit goal of helping people live more meaningful lives. This distinction is rarely understood by those who are involved in planning or delivering the educational program in the Jewish community. Typically, both the programmer and the instructor rely on personal experience as the guide to proper performance instead of a formal system of training which would prepare them to facilitate the learning process in the most effective and meaningful manner.

The U. S. Department of Education's Office of Educational Research and Improvement could provide an excellent service by addressing the needs of that segment of the population who are primarily interested in the development of a values education program for lifelong learners. Specifically, research should be commissioned which will provide guidance to those involved on the local and institutional level who are responsible for both program development and the facilitation of the learning process. By providing funding to researchers who are interested and prepared to devote serious energy to understanding the process of transmitting values to an adult population, the Department would be making an outstanding contribution to the field.

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